

PELVIC INFLAMMATORY DISEASE (PID)

Pelvic Inflammatory Disease, or PID, can be caused by many different bacteria but usually is caused by the chlamydia or gonorrhea germ. It is a serious complication of a sexually-transmitted disease that affects the female sex organs, which become inflamed or infected. If left untreated it can spread throughout all the sex organs into the pelvis and other organs.

How do I know I have PID?

You may experience lower abdominal pain (where you have cramps during your period) and/or back pain, bleeding between periods then heavy periods, pain during sex, nausea, vomiting, fever, and increased vaginal discharge. During an exam the female sex organs are tender to the touch. PID can be slow to begin and some women have no signs.

What do I do if I think I have PID?

Go to your local health district or health care provider. If you have PID, you will be given a prescription for medicine, an antibiotic, and a shot. **It is important to carefully follow instructions for taking the medicine, as well as other instructions the health care provider will have for you. Do not douche.** Take the medicine until it is **all** gone, even if the signs go away, **and do not share your medicine** with anyone. After you finish the medicine, go back to the clinic for an exam to be sure the PID is gone. Women with severe PID may be treated in the hospital. **Important: Always tell the health care provider if you are, or think you are, pregnant. Some medicines can hurt the fetus (unborn baby).**

Is PID serious? Yes!

If PID is not treated in time, scar tissue forms that block fallopian tubes, making it hard or impossible for a woman to get pregnant, or a tubal pregnancy can occur which would require surgery and may cause death to the pregnant woman and the fetus.

What about my sex partner?

Your sex partner(s) should also have an exam, be tested, and take medicine at the same time you do to be sure that it is cleared up. Don't have sex until the health care practitioner says it's okay. You should tell anyone you had sex with in the past few months so they can be tested and treated, and they should do the same. Your health district is willing to help you contact your partner(s).

How can I avoid getting PID?

- Have sex with only one person who is not infected and who only has sex with you.
- Use latex condoms correctly every time you have any sexual contact.
- Decide not to have sex — it's the only 100% sure way of avoiding PID and other sexually-transmitted diseases.
- When you use drugs and alcohol it's hard to make good decisions about your sexual activity - be safe.
- Remember: Anyone who is sexually active can get a sexually-transmitted disease — including HIV!

Where can I learn more about PID?

Call your personal health care provider or district health office. For referrals and additional information contact the National STD Hotline at (800) 227- 8922 or for local Idaho Referrals and information the Idaho CareLine at (800) 926-2588.

